

Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice System

STATEWIDE OUTCOME MEASURES



Pennsylvania Juvenile Courts
Pennsylvania Juvenile Probation Departments

Report Period
January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023



Introduction

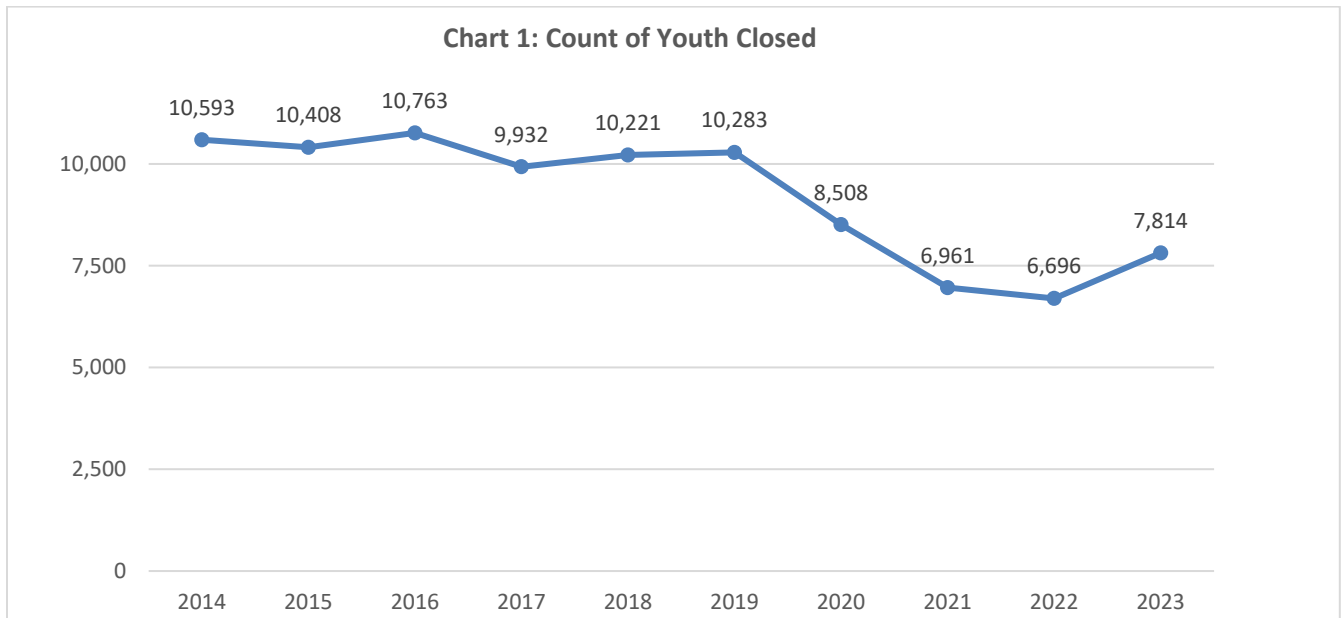
The Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission’s annual *Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice System Statewide Outcome Measures Report* aggregates juvenile justice outcomes. The population is youth who ended (i.e., “closed”) a period of supervision from a county juvenile probation department during the report period. Outcomes of Pennsylvania’s Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) goals of community protection, accountability, and competency development are reported.

In 2019, the report was updated to include measures of the Commonwealth’s Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES). As a result of this change, some of the data points only reflect 2019 forward. Additions included Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory™ (YLS) risk assessment scores and risk levels, case plan information, enhanced educational and competency development information, and reasons why conditions were not satisfied.

Trends

Table 1: Count of youth closed with an allegation of delinquency that resulted in probation supervision or other service provided by a county juvenile probation department

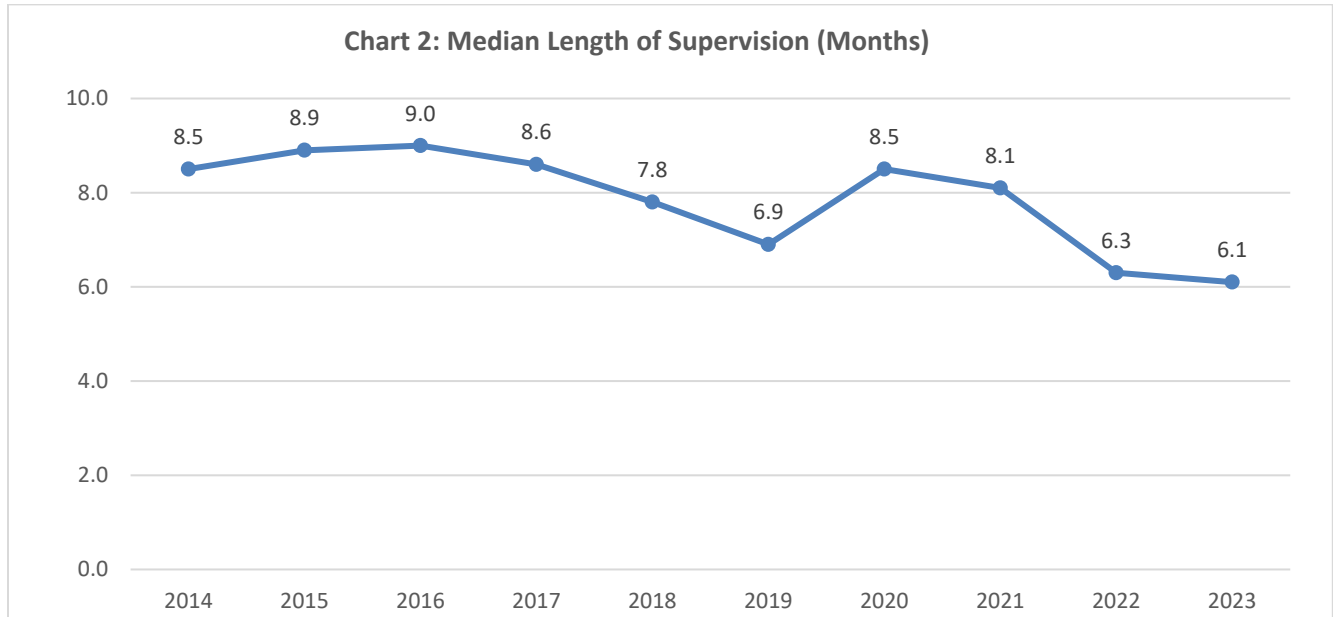
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	10,593	10,408	10,763	9,932	10,221	10,283	8,508	6,961	6,696	7,814	-26%



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Table 2: Median length of supervision (in months)¹

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Months	8.5	8.9	9.0	8.6	7.8	6.9	8.5	8.1	6.3	6.1	-28%



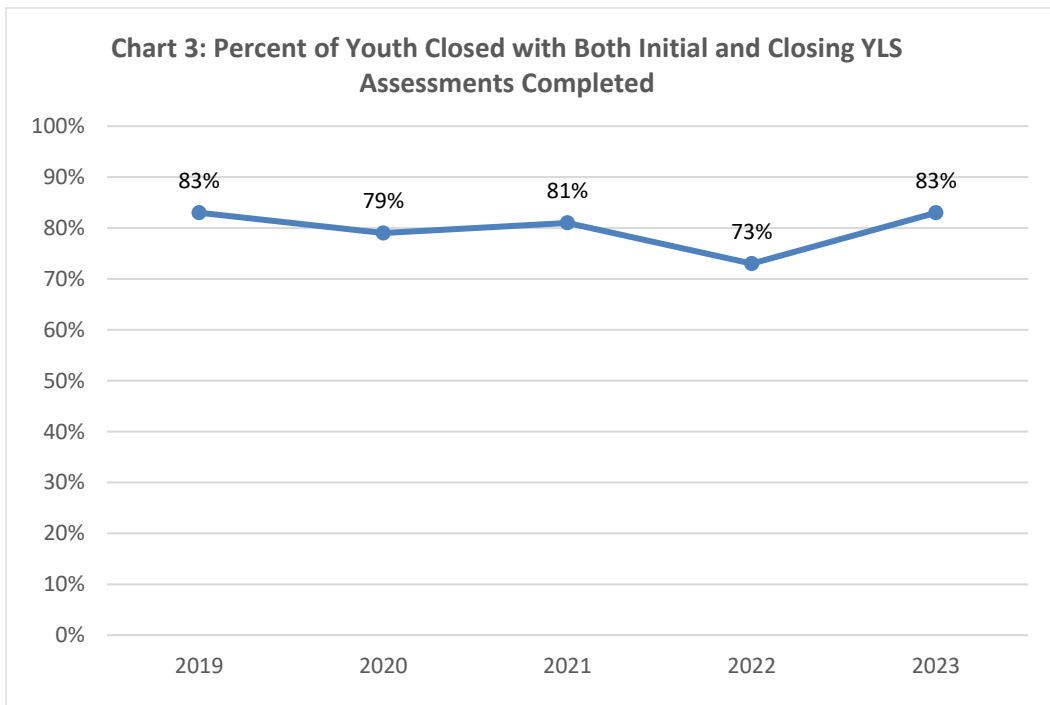
¹ The figures above were determined by calculating the median length of supervision using data extracted from youth-specific supervision dates in the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS).

YLS Trends

The Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory™ (YLS) is the cornerstone of Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES). The YLS is an actuarial risk assessment tool used for youth offenders. The tool contains 42 static and dynamic risk factors, which are divided into eight domains that research literature identifies as most predictive of youth re-offending. Generally, youth are assessed at the time they enter the juvenile justice system. Upon completion of the YLS, youth are assigned a numeric score and risk level (i.e., low, moderate, high, or very high²), and their top criminogenic needs (those factors recognized as driving their delinquent behavior) are identified. These results assist juvenile probation officers in targeting a youth’s specific needs through treatment, interventions, and services. Best practice dictates reassessing youth at regular intervals while under juvenile court supervision and again at the time of youth closure.

Table 3: Count and percent of youth closed with initial and closing YLS assessments completed

	2019	2020	2021	2022 ³	2023	Percent Change 2019-21	Percent Change 2022-23
Count	8,562	6,702	5,615	4,889	6,483	-34%	33%
Percent	83%	79%	81%	73%	83%	-2%	14%

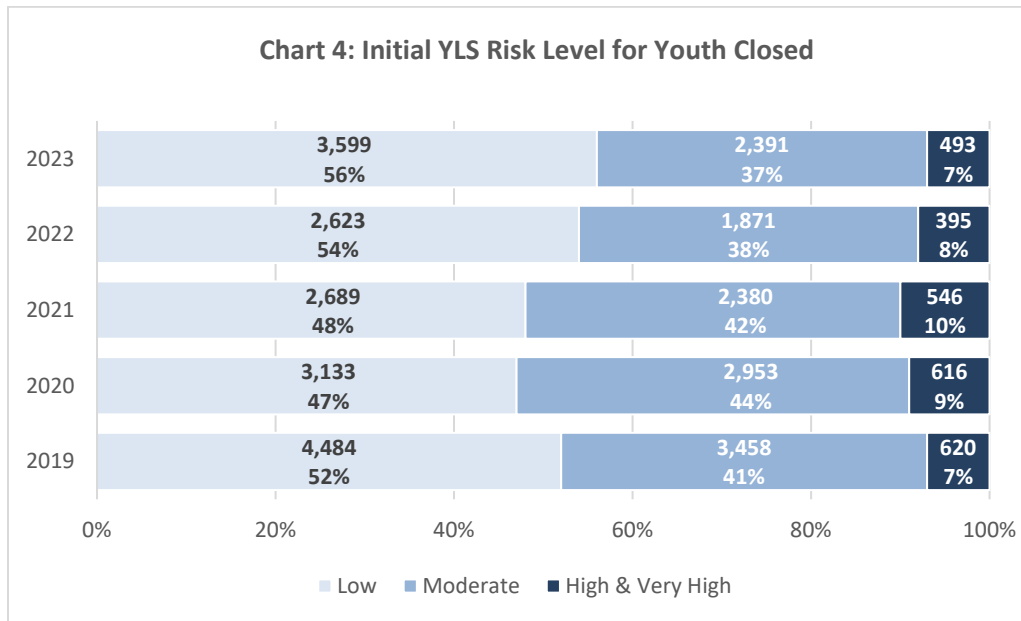


² Due to a small number of Very High risk levels, this report combines High and Very High risk levels.

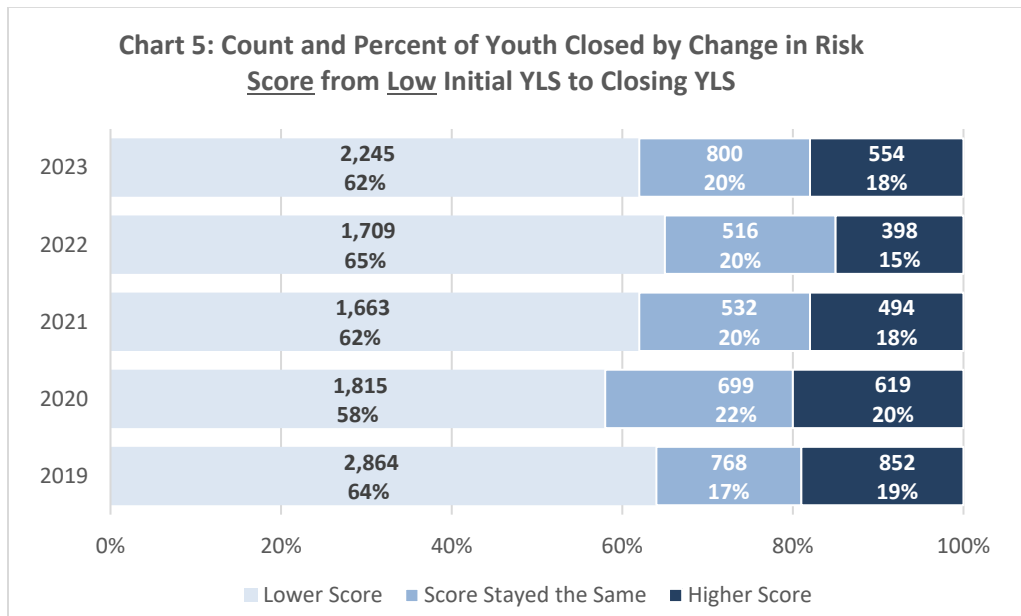
³ The “Closing” data for 2022 and later is limited to YLS assessments identified as “Closing” assessments in PaJCMS. In years past, any assessment identified as a “Review” or “Closing” was included in the figures. As a result, the reader is cautioned against comparing figures from 2022 and later to previous years’ figures.

Youth Closed by YLS Risk Score Change⁴

Changes in YLS risk score or risk level between the youth’s initial YLS and the youth’s closing YLS indicate the impact of a youth’s involvement in the juvenile justice system. Decreases in risk scores or risk levels likely indicate a positive outcome for the youth. The following charts reflect the change in numerical risk score from initial YLS to closing YLS, followed by similar charts for change in risk level category.

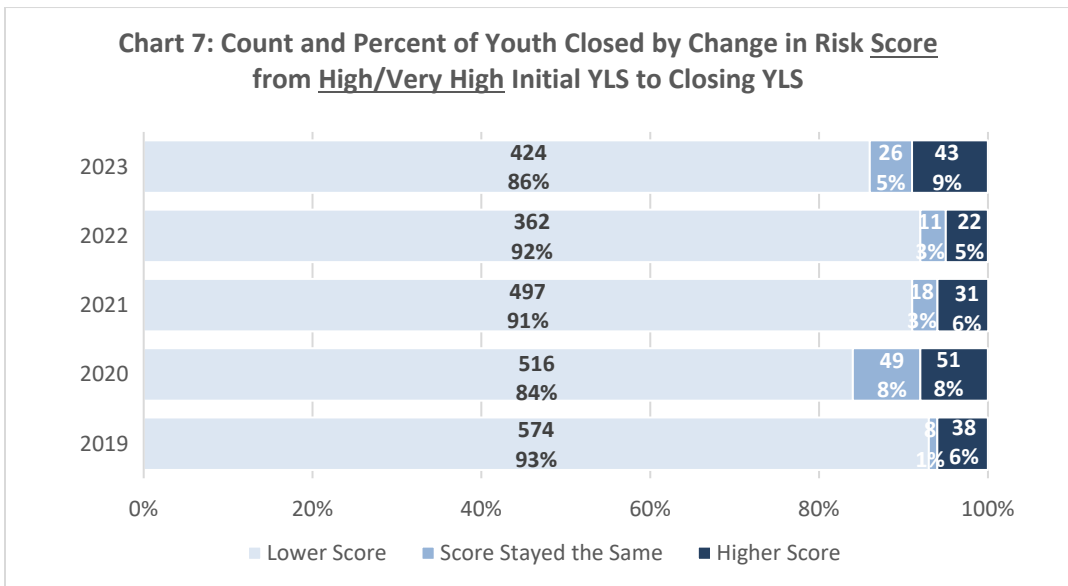
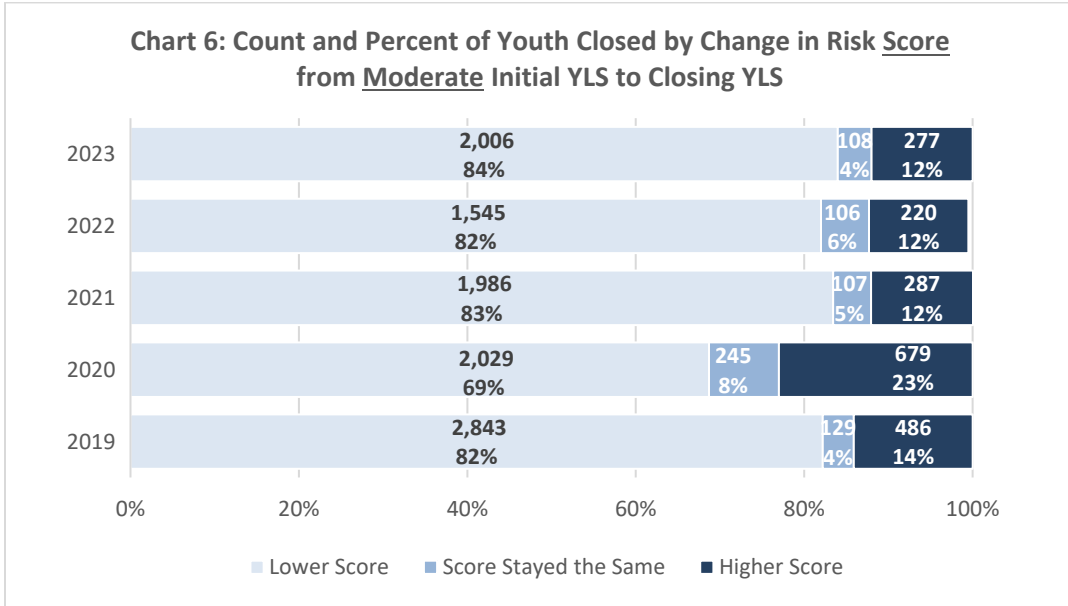


Changes in YLS Risk Score

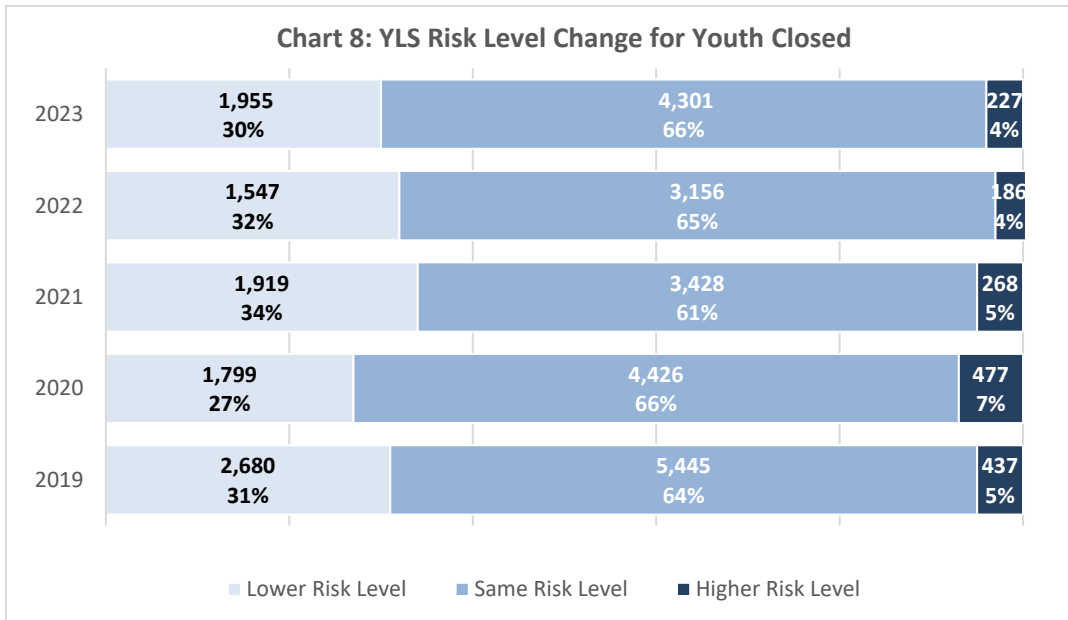


⁴ The YLS Risk Score and Risk Level sections reflect youth closed who had both an initial and closing YLS assessment completed.

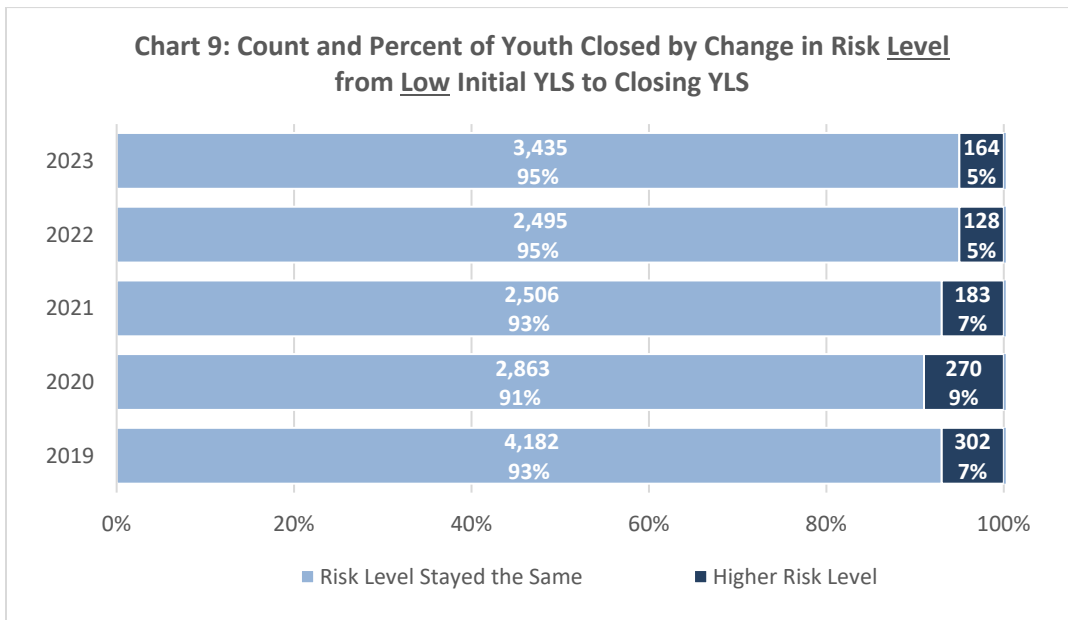
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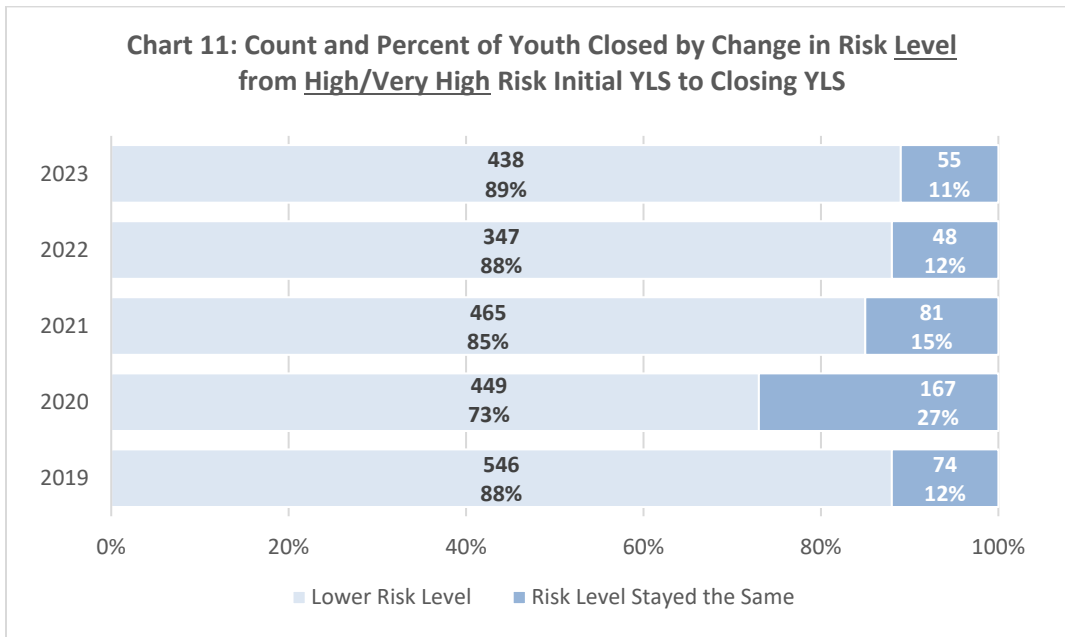
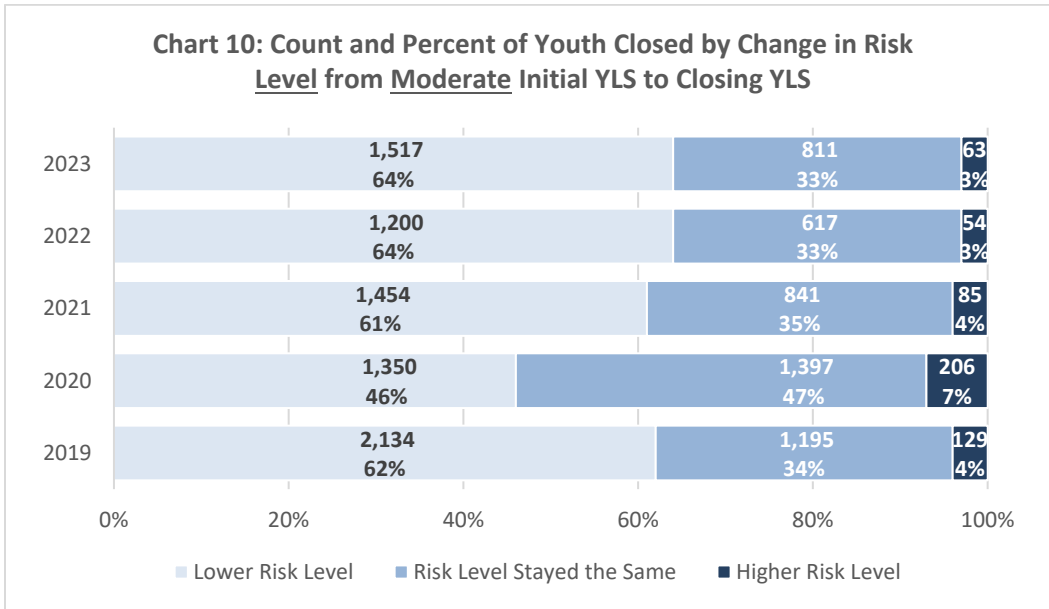
Youth Closed by YLS Risk Level Change



Changes in YLS Risk Level



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Community Protection

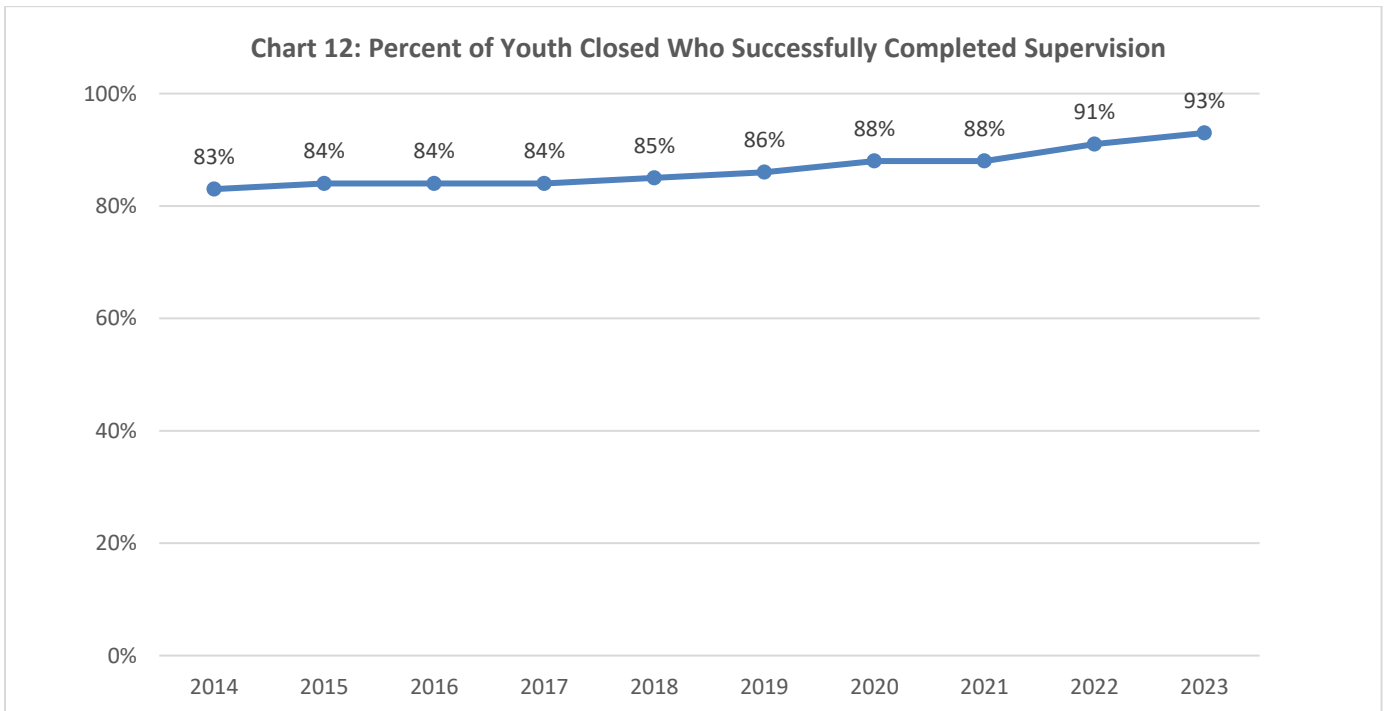
The citizens of Pennsylvania have a right to safe and secure communities. The juvenile justice system has a responsibility to protect the community from known youth offenders. Youth who do not commit a new offense while under court supervision have a higher probability of remaining crime free.

Youth Offenses While Under Supervision

Since 2014, county juvenile probation departments have supervised and closed 92,179 youths. The proportion of youth closed successfully during this time is 86%.

Table 4: Count and percent of youth closed who *successfully completed* supervision without a new offense resulting in a Consent Decree, Adjudication of Delinquency, Alternative Rehabilitative Disposition, Nolo Contendere, or Finding of Guilt in a criminal proceeding

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	8,837	8,718	9,021	8,328	8,731	8,883	7,484	6,135	6,075	7,246	-18%
Percent	83%	84%	84%	84%	85%	86%	88%	88%	91%	93%	12%



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Table 5: Count and percent of youth closed who were *not* petitioned to court for technical violations of probation while under supervision

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	8,512	8,296	8,580	7,985	8,511	8,681	7,199	6,001	5,886	7,114	-16%
Percent	80%	80%	80%	80%	83%	84%	85%	86%	88%	91%	14%

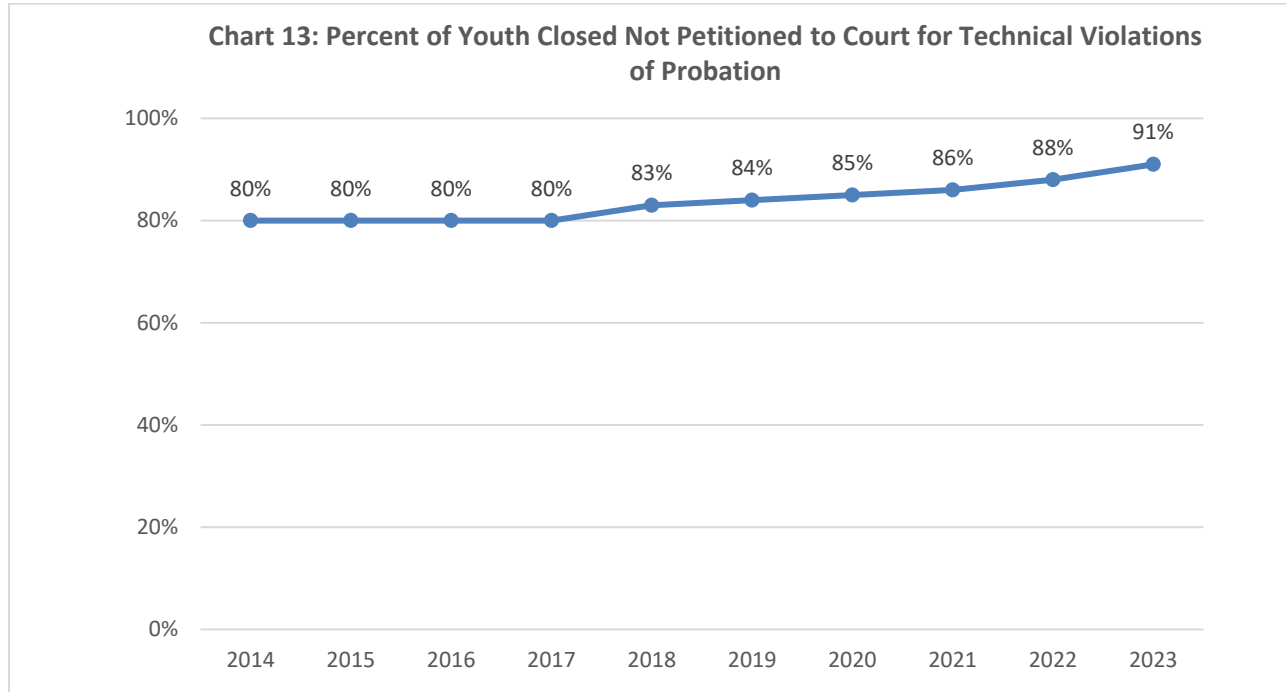


Table 6: Count and percent of youth closed who were petitioned to court for technical violations of probation that resulted in a change of disposition

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	954	762	621	506	445	-53%
Percent	9%	9%	9%	8%	6%	-33%

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Adult Offenses and Direct File While Under Supervision

Table 7: Count and percent of youth closed who, while under supervision, were charged with a new criminal offense and whose cases are pending in criminal court

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	405	549	578	541	477	275	263	254	224	162	-60%
Percent	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	-50%

Table 8: Count and percent of youth closed who, while under supervision, were charged with a new offense and subsequently entered Alternative Rehabilitative Disposition, a plea of Nolo Contendere, or were found guilty in criminal court

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	293	189	167	162	136	-54%
Percent	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	-33%

Table 9: Count and percent of youth closed who, while under supervision, were charged with a “direct file” offense and whose cases are pending in criminal court

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	47	76	50	59	63	18	19	19	21	17	-64%
Percent	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	-50%

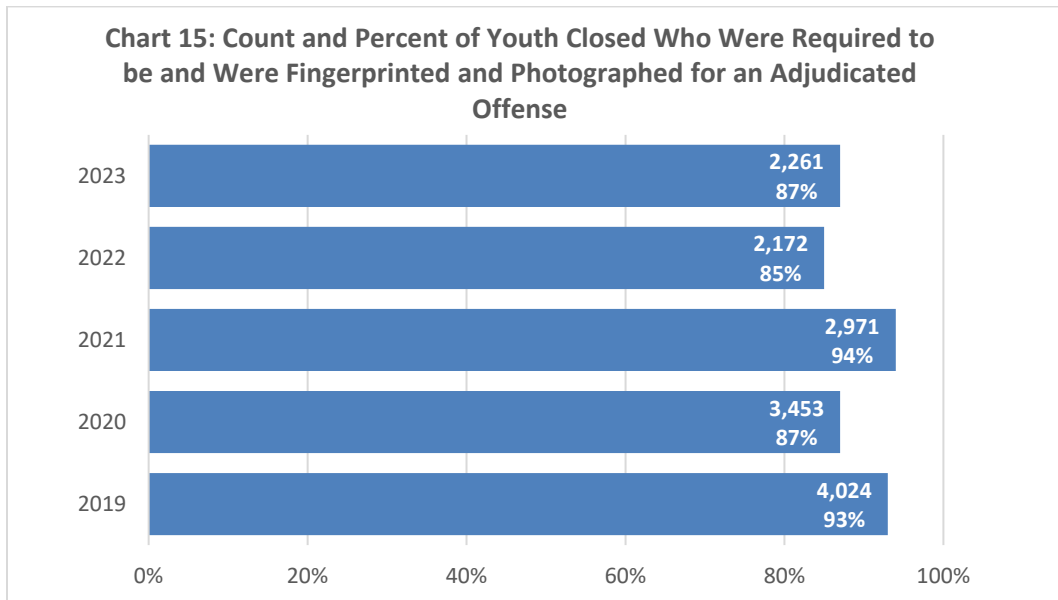
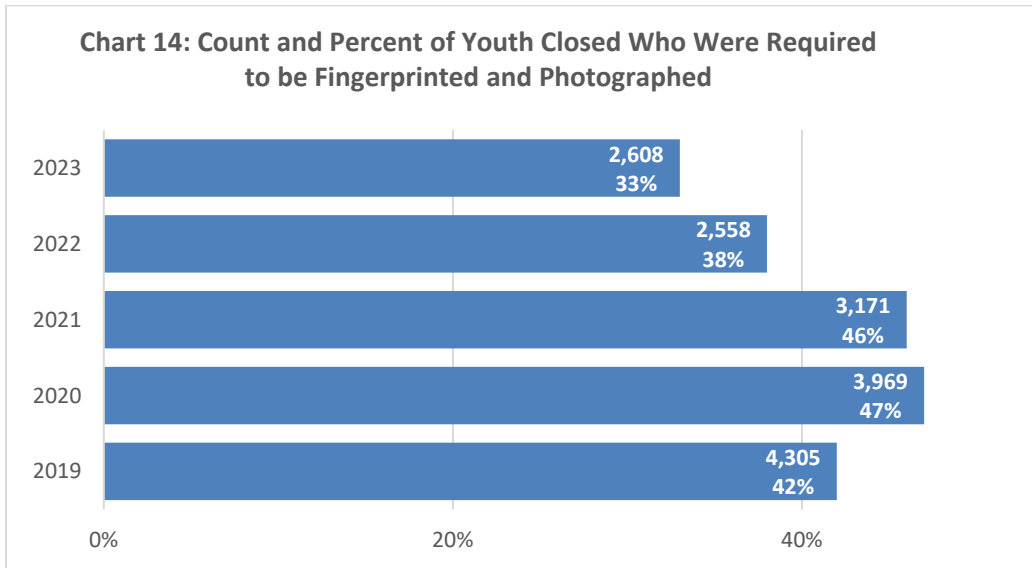
Table 10: Count and percent of youth closed who, while under supervision, were charged with a “direct file” offense and subsequently entered Alternative Rehabilitative Disposition, a plea of Nolo Contendere, or were found guilty in criminal court

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	36	37	35	36	35	-3%
Percent	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	-25%

Fingerprints, Photographs, and DNA Collection

Table 11: Count and percent of youth closed who were required to be fingerprinted and photographed for an adjudicated offense

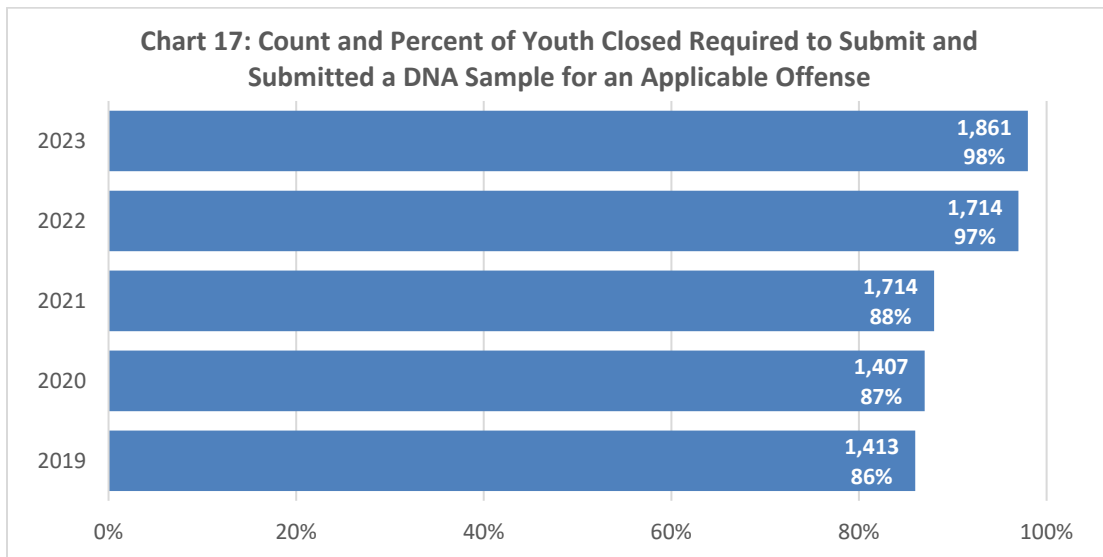
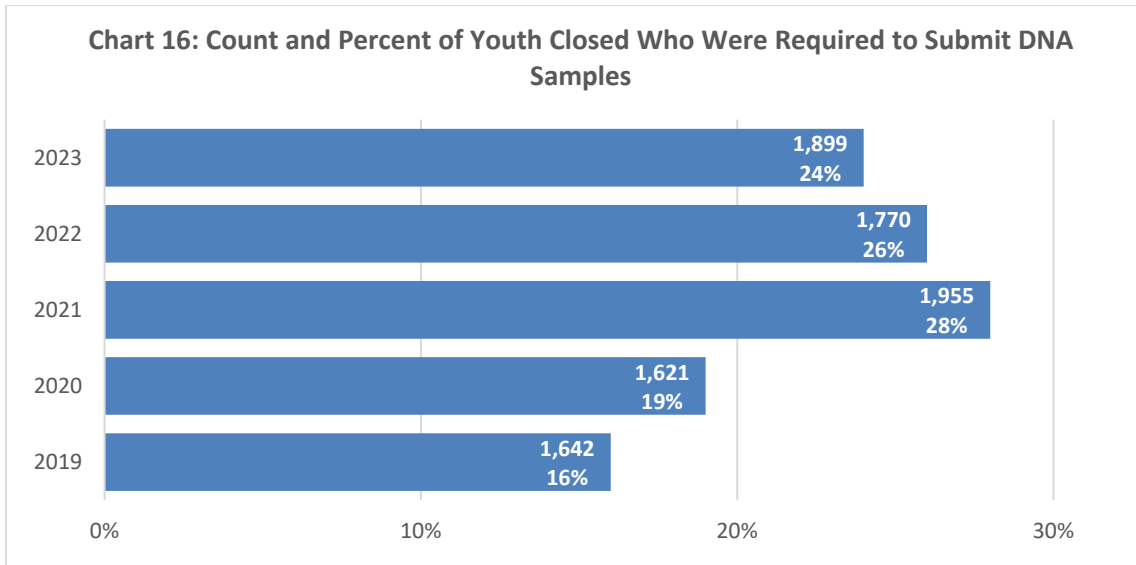
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	4,305	3,969	3,171	2,558	2,608	-39%
Percent	42%	47%	46%	38%	33%	-21%



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Table 12: Count and percent of youth closed who were required to submit DNA samples

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-21	Percent Change 2022-23
Count	1,642	1,621	1,955	1,770 ⁵	1,899	19%	7%
Percent	16%	19%	28%	26%	24%	75%	-8%



⁵ The DNA questions were changed in PaJCMS in September 2021. Because of the late year modification, the PaJCMS DNA required calculation continued to be used for 2021. From 2022 and forward, the data is based on the county's responses to this question in PaJCMS.

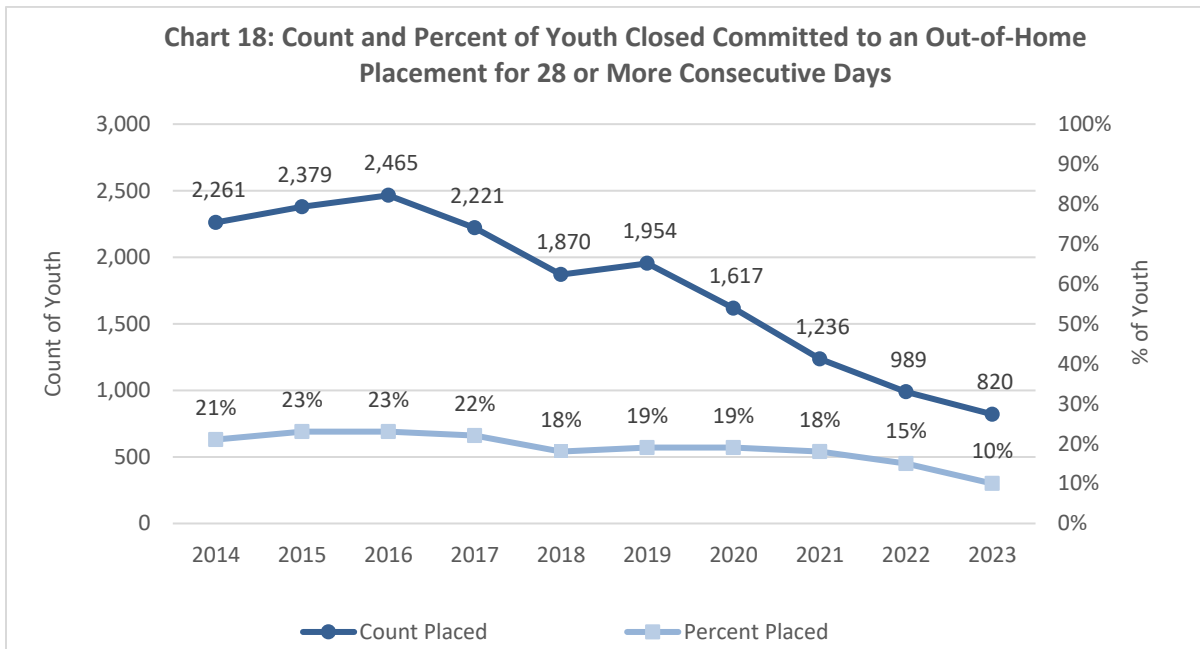
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Placement Summary

The following information pertains to youth closed who, while under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court, were committed to out-of-home placement for a period greater than 28 days at least once in conjunction with a juvenile delinquency disposition. The proportion of youth closed who experienced a placement episode decreased to 10% in 2023 from 15% in 2022. At the same time, the median length of placement decreased from 8.6 months in 2022 to 8.3 months in 2023.

Table 13: Count and percent of youth closed committed to out-of-home placement for 28 or more consecutive days (excluding detention, shelter care, and diagnostic placements)

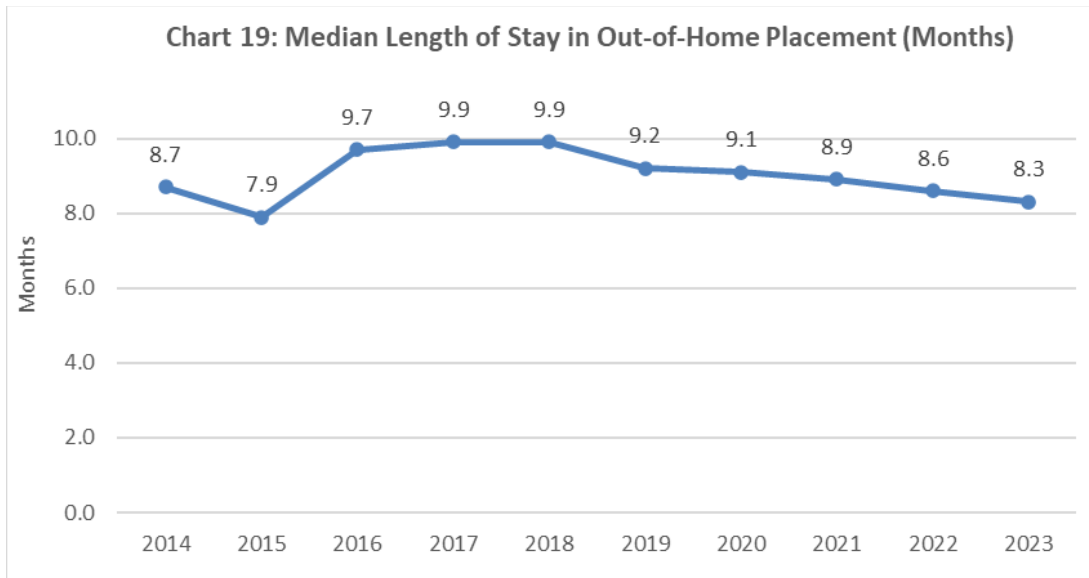
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	2,261	2,379	2,465	2,221	1,870	1,954	1,617	1,236	989	820	-64%
Percent	21%	23%	23%	22%	18%	19%	19%	18%	15%	10%	-52%



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Table 14: Median length of stay in out-of-home placement (excluding detention, shelter care, and diagnostic placements), in months

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Months	8.7	7.9	9.7	9.9	9.9	9.2	9.1	8.9	8.6	8.3	-5%



Accountability

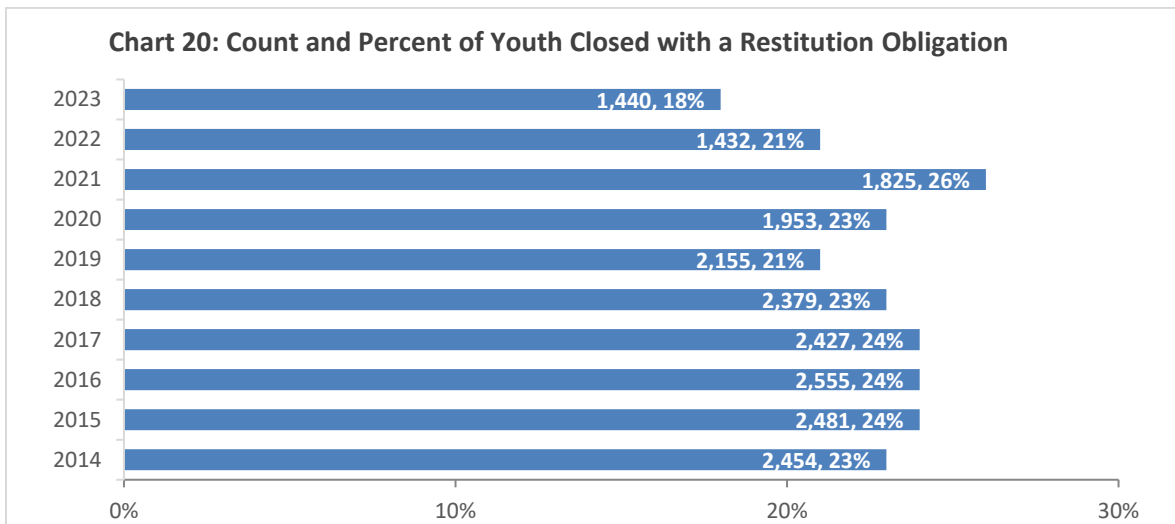
In Pennsylvania, when a crime is committed by a youth, an obligation to the victim and community is incurred. The juvenile justice system has a responsibility to ensure that youth offenders meet their obligation to repair the harm caused by their crimes. It is important that youth offenders make and fulfill a commitment to living crime-free lives.

Restitution

Victims of youth crime are entitled to be restored, to the extent possible, to their pre-crime economic status. The payment of restitution by the youth is one of the most important outcomes sought by victims. The count and percent of youth closed who made full restitution to their victims and the amount of restitution paid measure the system’s success in achieving offender accountability and victim restoration. Since 2014, victims have received \$16,454,119 in restitution from youth. Additionally, youth have completed 2,643,413 hours of community service. The value of the community service hours completed equates to services worth approximately \$19,164,744 based upon a minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour.

Table 15: Count and percent of youth closed with a restitution obligation

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	2,454	2,481	2,555	2,427	2,379	2,155	1,953	1,825	1,432	1,440	-41%
Percent	23%	24%	24%	24%	23%	21%	23%	26%	21%	18%	-22%



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Table 16: Count and percent of youth closed who made full restitution to their victim(s)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	2,062	2,065	2,117	2,000	2,006	1,922	1,723	1,611	1,231	1,265	-39%
Percent	84%	83%	83%	82%	84%	89%	88%	88%	86%	88%	5%

Chart 21: Count and Percent of Youth Closed who Made Full Restitution

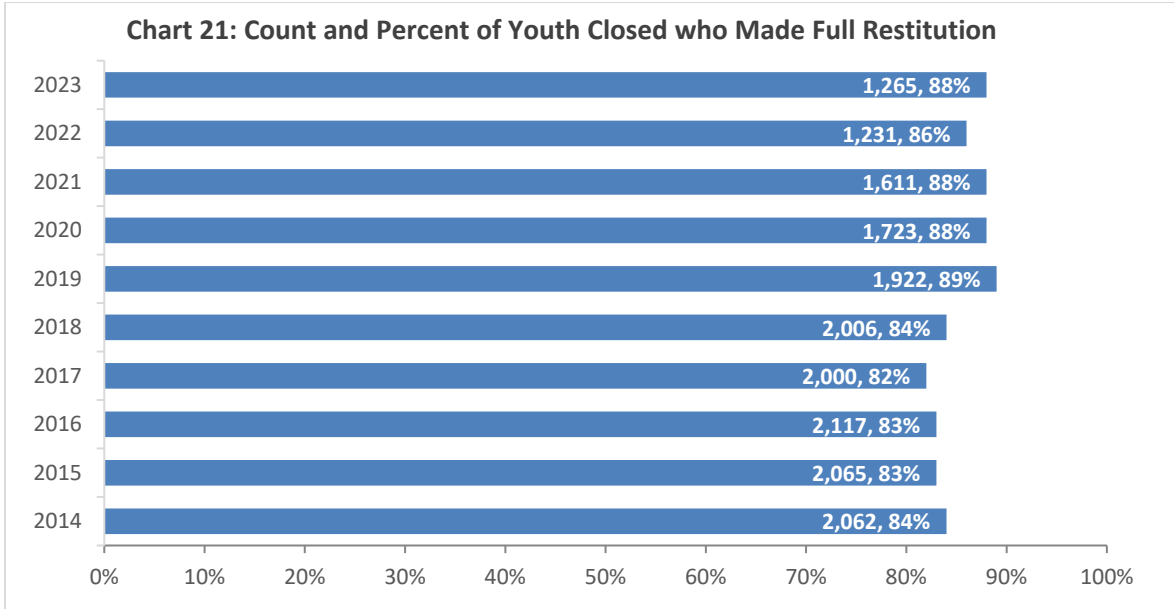
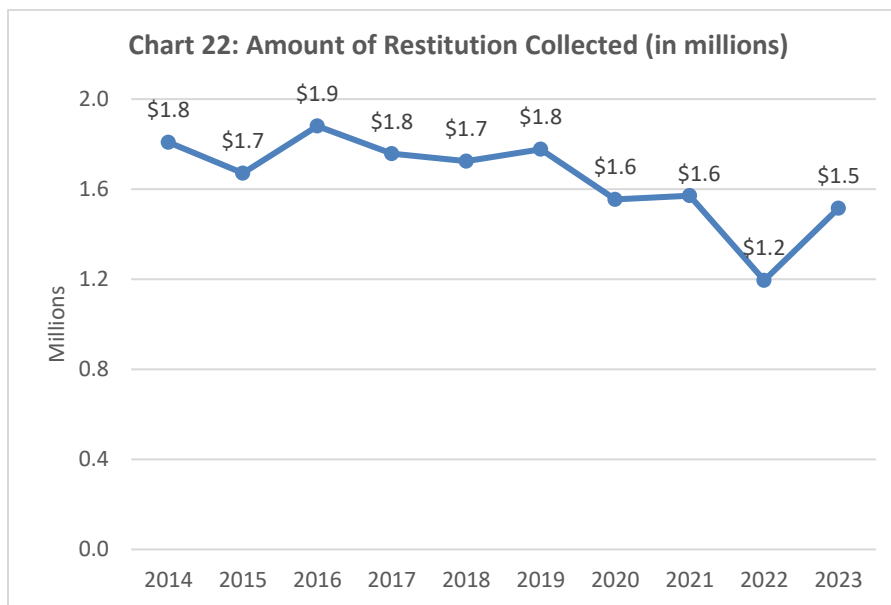


Table 17: Total amount of restitution collected

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Amount	\$1.8m	\$1.7m	\$1.9m	\$1.8m	\$1.7m	\$1.8m	\$1.6m	\$1.6m	\$1.2m	\$1.5m	-17%

Chart 22: Amount of Restitution Collected (in millions)



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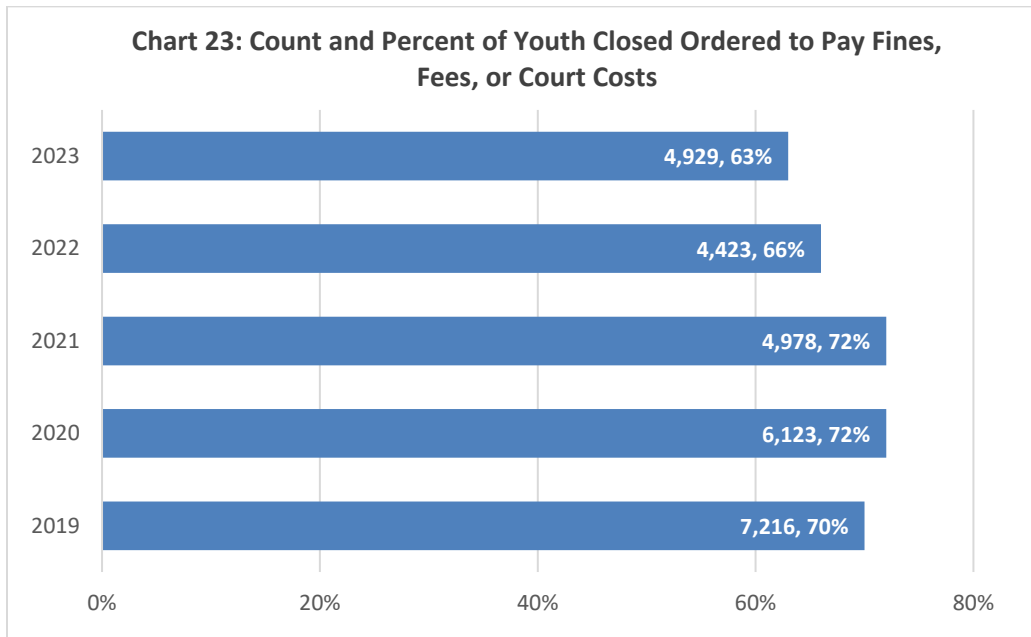
Table 18: Count and percent of youth closed by reason restitution obligation was not fully paid

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Aged out and judgment was entered	74 32%	89 39%	89 42%	77 38%	67 39%	-9% 22%
Aged out and no judgment was entered	11 5%	0 0%	11 5%	15 8%	11 6%	0% 20%
Youth closed and judgment was entered prior to aging out	93 40%	78 34%	73 34%	84 42%	56 32%	-40% -20%
Youth closed with no judgment entered	51 22%	58 25%	36 17%	22 10%	37 21%	-27% -5%
Deceased	4 1%	5 2%	5 2%	3 2%	4 2%	0% 100%

Fines, Fees, or Court Costs

Table 19: Count and percent of youth closed ordered to pay other fines, fees, or court costs

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	7,216	6,123	4,978	4,423	4,929	-32%
Percent	70%	72%	72%	66%	63%	-10%



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Table 20: Count and percent of youth closed obligated who fully paid fines, fees, or court costs

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	6,516	5,429	4,376	3,887	4,469	-31%
Percent	90%	89%	88%	88%	91%	1%

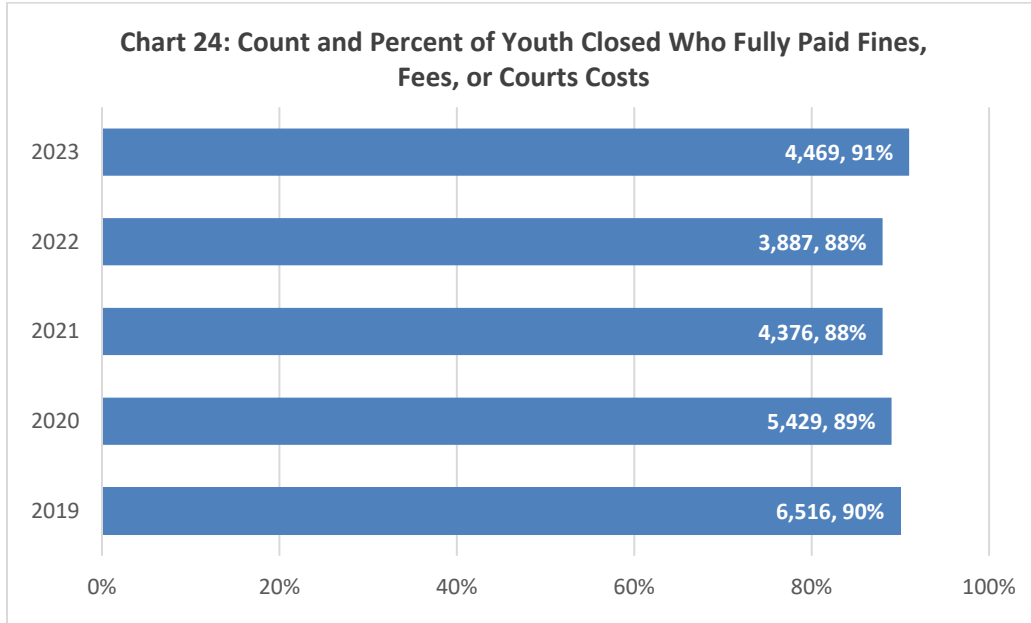
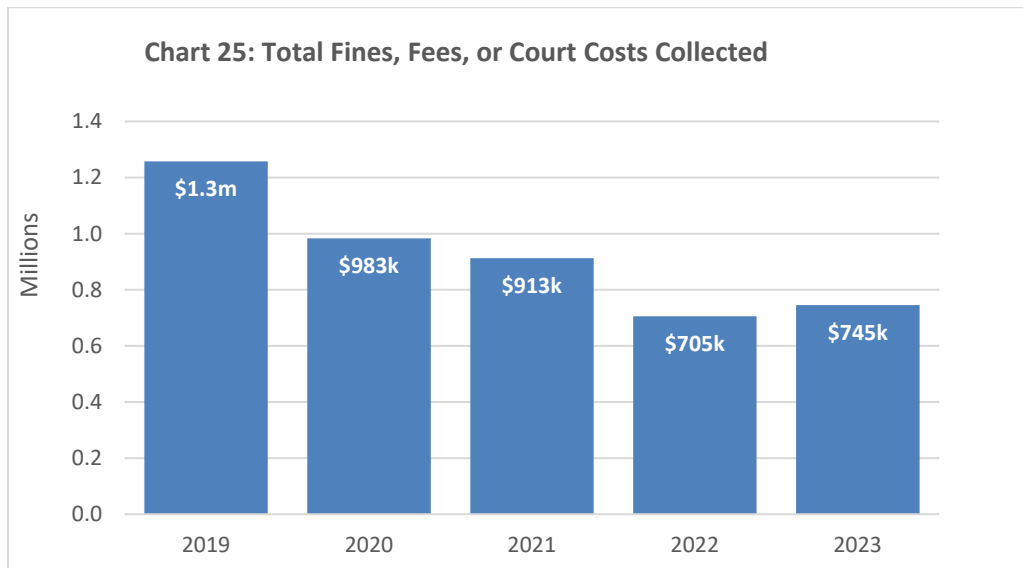


Table 21: Total amount of other fines, fees, or court costs collected

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Amount	\$1.3m	\$983k	\$913k	\$705k	\$745k	-43%



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Table 22: Count and percent youth closed by reasons why other fines, fees, or court costs were not paid in full

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Aged out and judgment was entered	60 9%	78 11%	81 14%	67 12%	57 12%	-5% 33%
Aged out and no judgment was entered	26 4%	17 3%	36 6%	38 7%	27 6%	4% 50%
Case closed and judgment was entered prior to aging out	192 27%	173 25%	164 27%	166 30%	135 29%	-30% 7%
Case closed with no judgment entered	413 59%	418 60%	315 52%	272 50%	233 51%	-44% -14%
Deceased	9 1%	8 1%	6 1%	6 1%	8 2%	-11% 100%

Community Service

Through the completion of meaningful community service, youth demonstrate their commitment to making amends for the harm their actions have caused. The count and percent of youth closed who complete assigned community service obligations and the count of community service hours completed are the primary measures of success. Most youth complete their community service assignments, and the community receives valuable service from these youth.

Table 23: Count and percent of youth closed who were assigned community service

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	7,597	7,422	7,767	7,190	7,114	6,873	5,558	4,331	4,031	4,824	-37%
Percent	72%	71%	72%	72%	70%	67%	65%	62%	60%	62%	-14%

Table 24: Count and percent of youth closed who completed assigned community service obligation

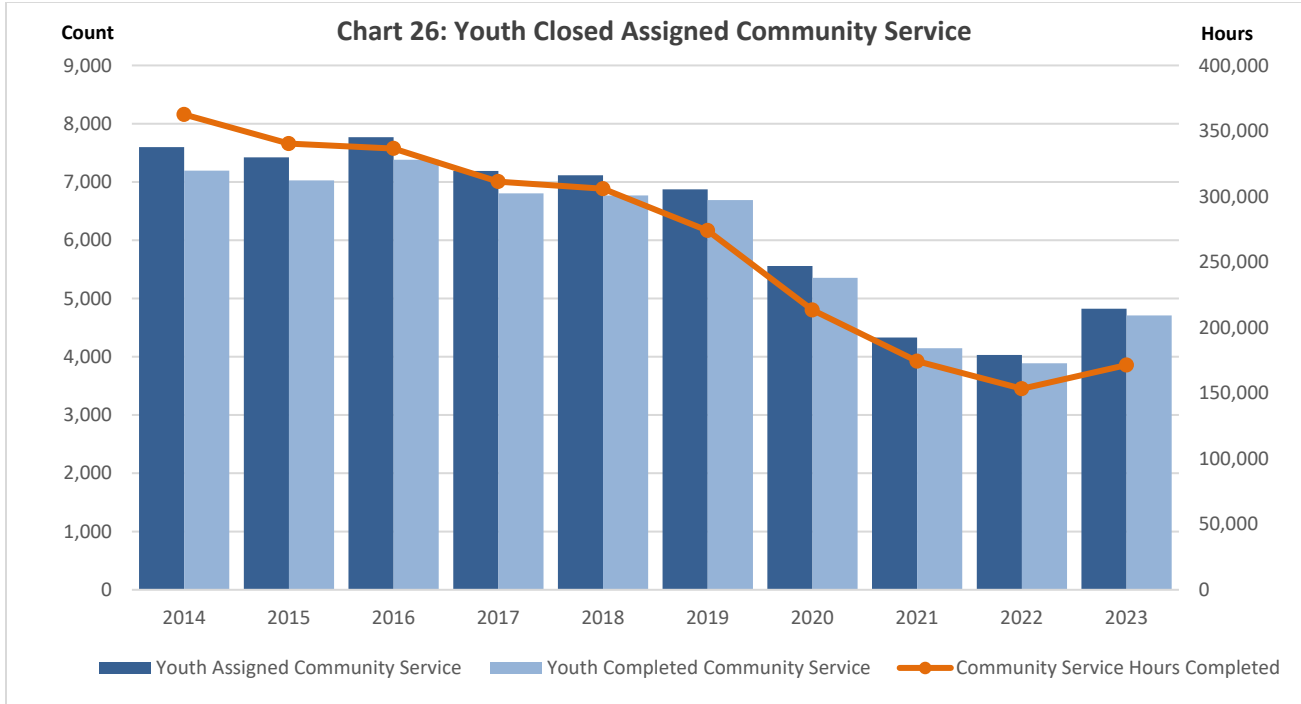
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	7,193	7,027	7,381	6,803	6,770	6,688	5,353	4,146	3,888	4,710	-35%
Percent	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	97%	96%	96%	95%	98%	3%

Table 25: Total community service hours completed and corresponding dollar value⁶

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Hours	362,569	340,350	336,603	311,365	305,927	274,037	213,423	174,358	153,367	171,414	-53%
Dollar Value	\$2.6m	\$2.5m	\$2.4m	\$2.3m	\$2.2m	\$1.9m	\$1.6m	\$1.2m	\$1.1m	\$1.2m	-53%

⁶ Calculated based on Pennsylvania's minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour.

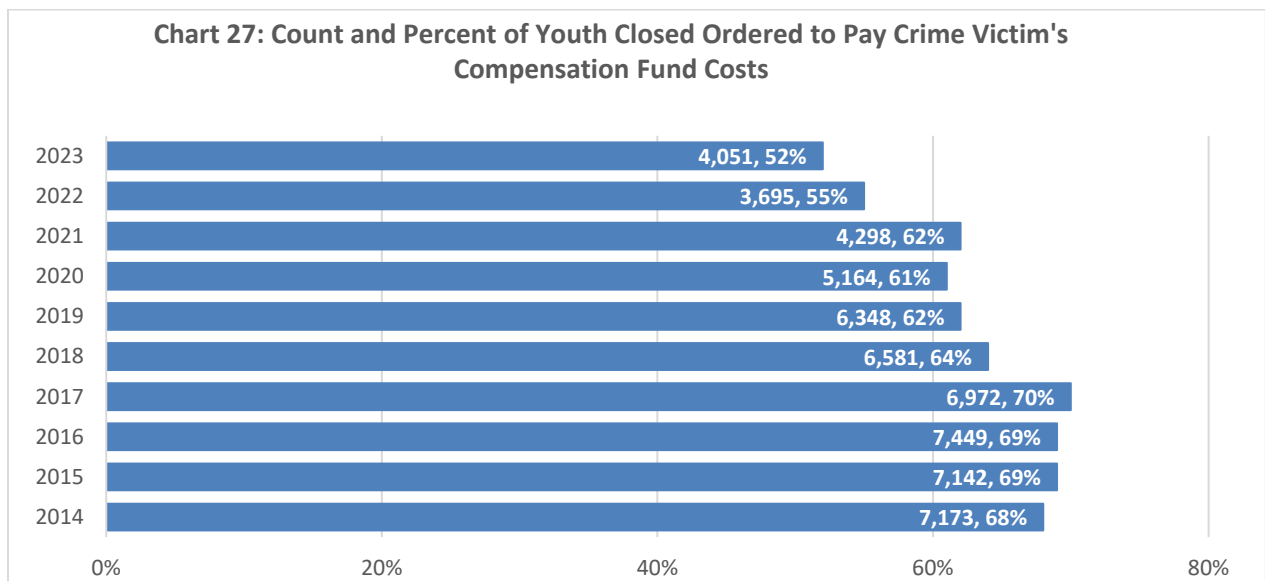
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Crime Victim Compensation

Table 26: Count and percent of youth closed ordered to pay Crime Victim's Compensation Fund costs

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	7,173	7,142	7,449	6,972	6,581	6,348	5,164	4,298	3,695	4,051	-44%
Percent	68%	69%	69%	70%	64%	62%	61%	62%	55%	52%	-24%



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Table 27: Count and percent of youth closed who paid Crime Victim's Compensation Fund costs in full

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	6,528	6,444	6,532	6,166	5,900	5,816	4,648	3,828	3,283	3,670	-44%
Percent	91%	90%	88%	88%	90%	92%	90%	89%	89%	91%	0%

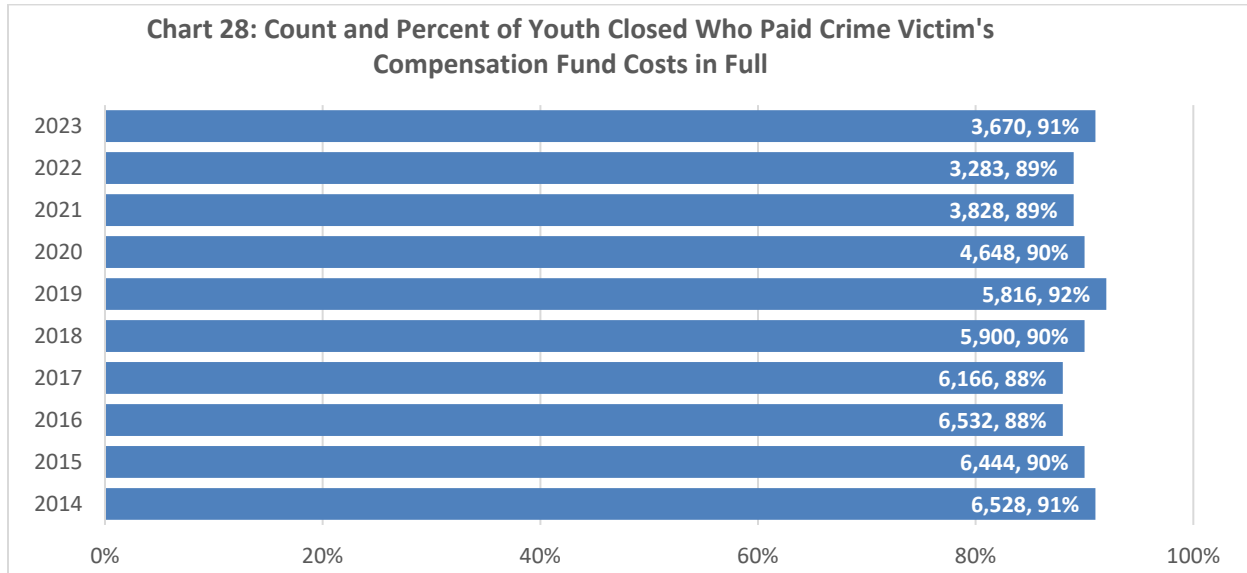
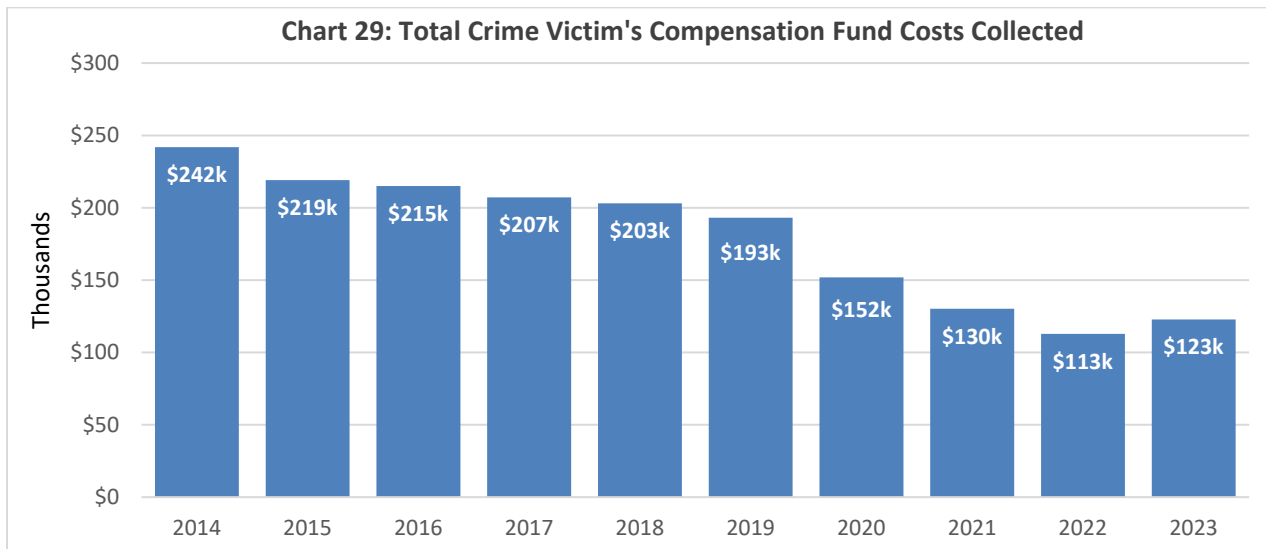


Table 28: Total amount Crime Victim's Compensation Fund costs collected

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Amount	\$242k	\$219k	\$215k	\$207k	\$203k	\$193k	\$152k	\$130k	\$113k	\$123k	-49%



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Victim Awareness

Table 29: Count and percent of youth closed who were directed / ordered to participate in a victim awareness curriculum / program while under supervision

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	4,400	4,548	5,105	4,818	4,955	4,791	4,017	3,342	3,011	3,501	-20%
Percent	42%	44%	47%	49%	48%	47%	47%	48%	45%	45%	7%

Chart 30: Count and Percent of Youth Closed Directed / Ordered to Participate in a Victim Awareness Program

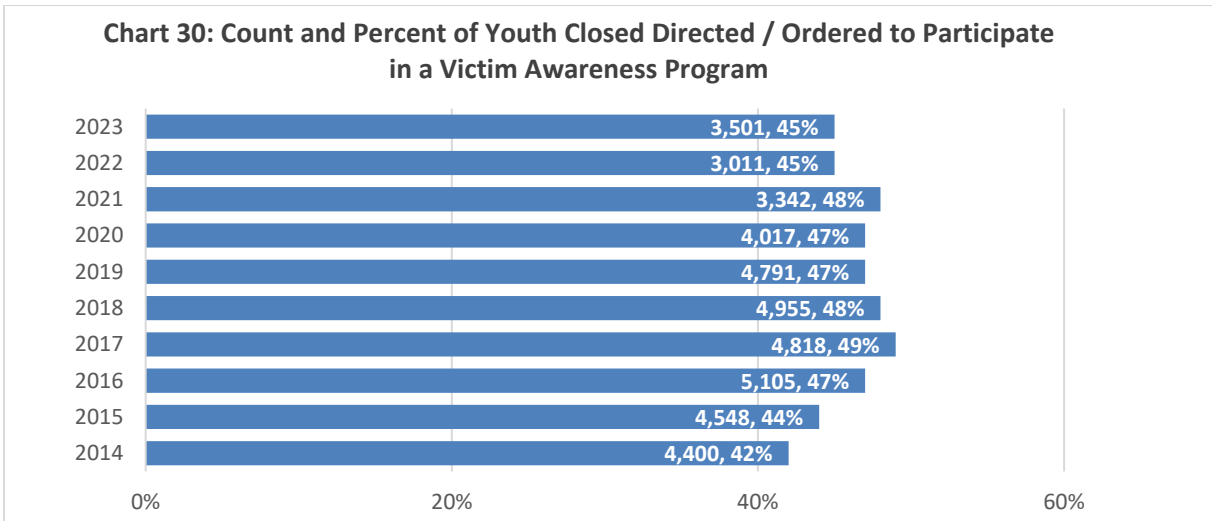
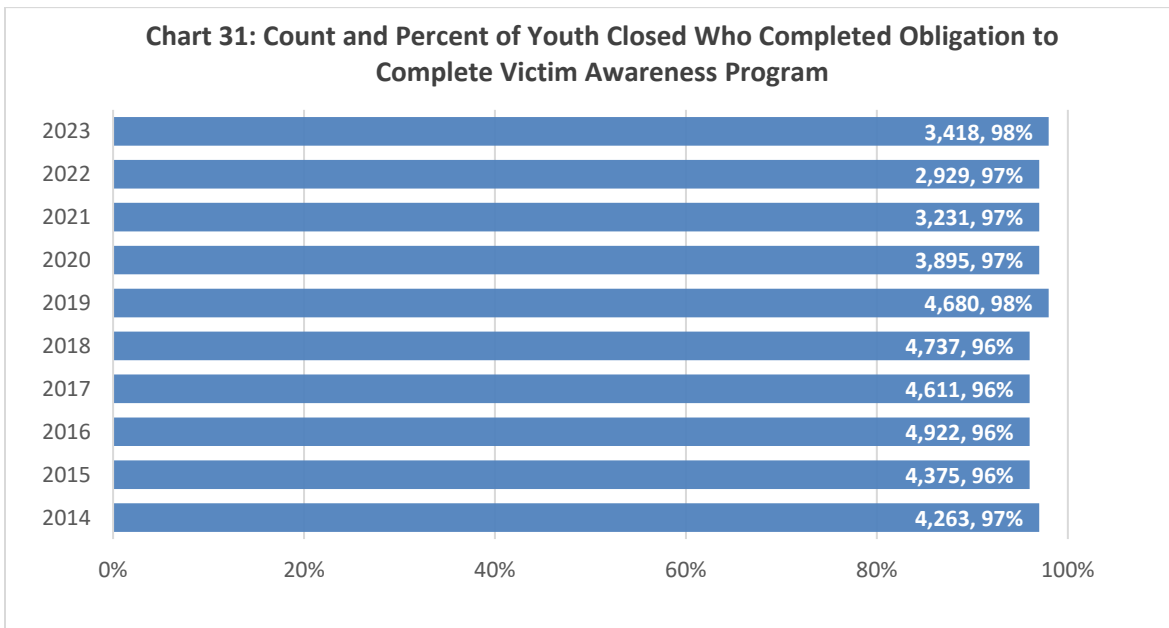


Table 30: Count and percent of youth who successfully completed a victim awareness curriculum / program while under supervision

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	4,263	4,375	4,922	4,611	4,737	4,680	3,895	3,231	2,929	3,418	-20%
Percent	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%	98%	97%	97%	97%	98%	1%

Chart 31: Count and Percent of Youth Closed Who Completed Obligation to Complete Victim Awareness Program



Competency Development

Youth who come under the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system should leave the system more capable of being responsible and productive members of their communities. Areas in which one could reasonably expect young people in trouble with the law to build and demonstrate competencies depending on their age and stage of development are Pro-Social Skills, Moral Reasoning Skills, Academic Skills, Workforce Development Skills, and Independent Living Skills.

Additionally, youth who are either in school or working have a significantly greater chance of not belonging to a gang and avoiding criminal behaviors such as theft, assault, selling drugs, and carrying a handgun.

Case Plan Activities

Table 31: Count and percent of youth closed who had a case plan completed that included goals and risk reduction activities to address the top 2-3 criminogenic needs identified by the YLS

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	3,814	3,490	2,903	2,518	2,983	-22%
Percent	37%	41%	42%	38%	38%	3%

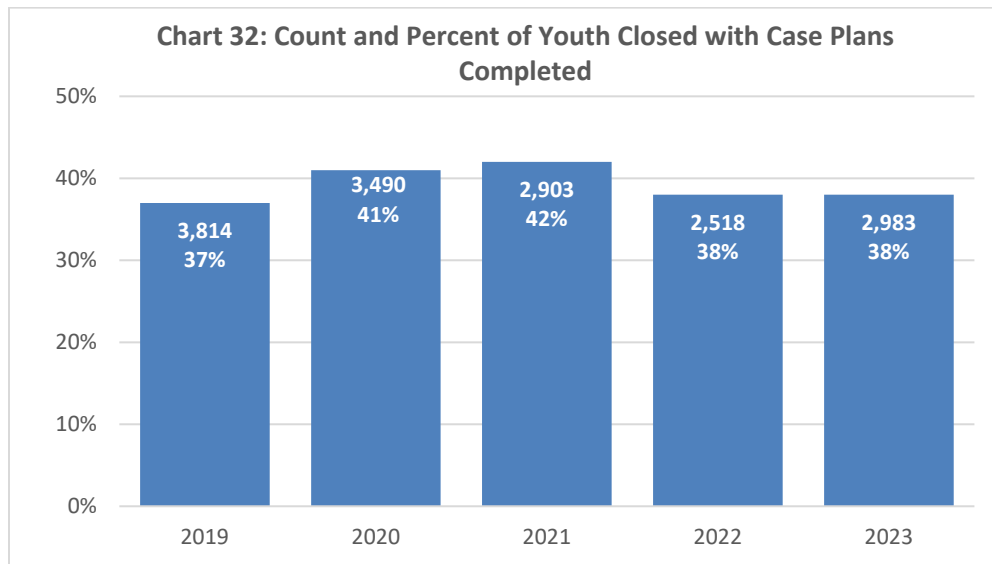


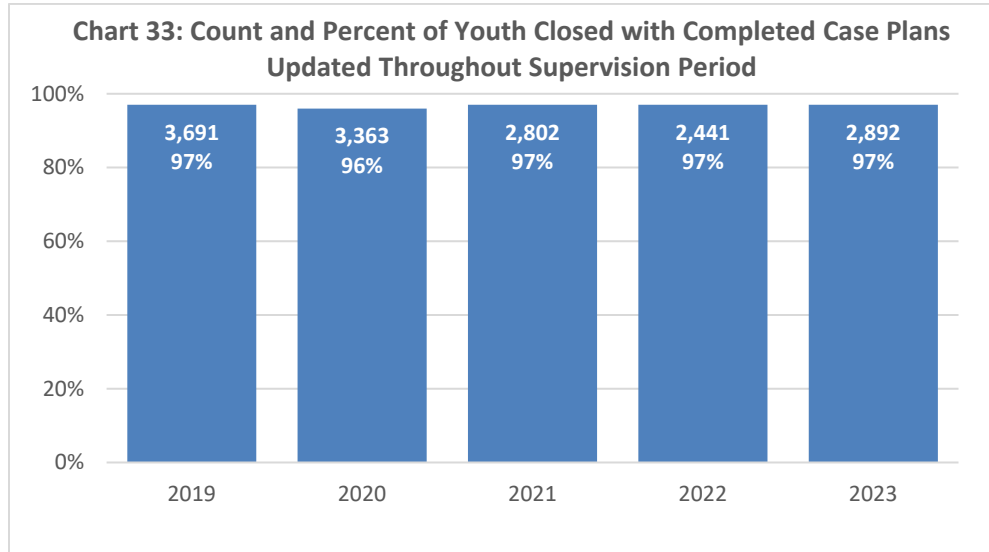
Table 32: Count and percent of youth closed with case plans completed that included:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Skill Building & Tools Activities	2,837 74%	2,669 76%	2,124 73%	1,864 74%	2,279 76%	-20% 3%
Cognitive Behavioral Group Interventions	1,538 40%	1,471 42%	1,160 40%	955 38%	1,039 35%	-32% -13%
Referral to Treatment Services	2,260 59%	2,117 61%	1,734 60%	1,368 54%	1,527 51%	-32% -14%
Other Activities	195 5%	199 6%	183 6%	219 9%	226 8%	16% 60%

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Table 33: Count and percent of case plans updated throughout the supervision period

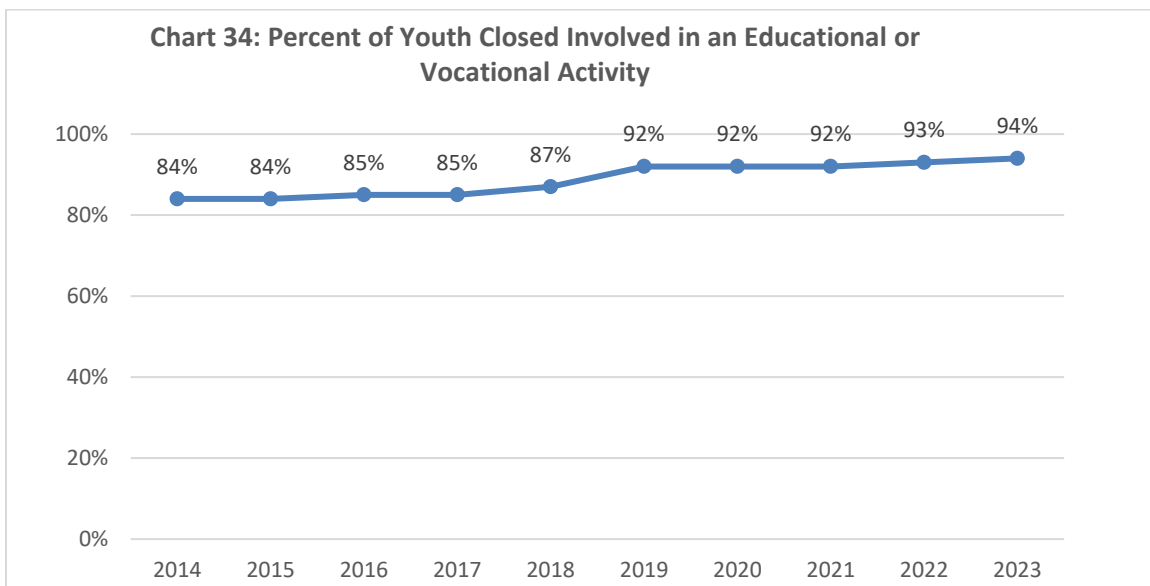
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Count	3,691	3,363	2,802	2,441	2,892	-22%
Percent	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%	0%



Education and Employment

Table 34: Count and percent of youth employed or actively engaged in an educational or vocational activity at closing

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2014-23
Count	8,938	8,788	9,095	8,434	8,922	9,473	7,790	6,422	6,214	7,364	-18%
Percent	84%	84%	85%	85%	87%	92%	92%	92%	93%	94%	12%



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Table 35: Count and percent of youth by educational or vocational activity						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-23
Attending School & Passing	6,092 64%	5,134 66%	3,952 62%	4,187 67%	5,441 74%	-11% 16%
Attending School & Not Passing	493 5%	334 4%	512 8%	372 6%	441 6%	-11% 20%
Graduated High School	1,316 14%	1,178 15%	1,077 17%	867 14%	835 11%	-37% -21%
Attending G.E.D. Preparation Classes	292 3%	192 3%	171 3%	142 2%	131 2%	-55% -33%
Obtained G.E.D.	291 3%	206 3%	153 2%	113 2%	102 1%	-65% -67%
Participating in Vocational Training	255 3%	169 2%	131 2%	122 2%	131 2%	-49% -33%
Enrolled or Participating in Higher Education	467 5%	344 4%	684 11%	231 4%	248 3%	-47% -40%
Actively Seeking Employment	888 9%	758 10%	758 12%	568 9%	605 8%	-32% -11%
Employed Full-Time	933 10%	720 9%	730 11%	654 11%	543 7%	-42% -30%
Employed Part-Time	2,045 22%	1,587 20%	1,493 23%	1,432 23%	1,529 21%	-25% -5%

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